

War in Iraq

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Congressman Davis has consistently opposed the war in Iraq. The remarks below were given in October of 2003, they remain relevant today:

The sucking sound of U.S. jobs leaving for low wage havens abroad is now being supplemented by the even more ominous sound of U.S. boots being drawn into the quagmire of occupying Iraq. The horrific reports surrounding the treatment of prisoners at Abu Ghraib have forced every American to focus on the consequences of our occupation of Iraq. New revelations demand that Congress examine the responsibilities of the chain of command all the way up to the Secretary of Defense. I have joined the Congressional Black Caucus and others in calling for the resignation of Secretary Rumsfeld.

It is no coincidence that on the morning of April 28 a Department of Justice attorney representing Defense Secretary Rumsfeld was arguing before the Supreme Court that the United States should have the right to imprison a U.S. citizen indefinitely, without legal representation or any other contact with society based on a "Presidential determination." That same evening came the first news reports of the abuse of Iraqi prisoners. There remain serious questions about the impact of some provisions of the Patriot Act on basic notions of our democracy.

I voted against authorizing the invasion and occupation of Iraq. In public statements at the time (3/17/2003) I noted:

"I remain unconvinced that war is the necessary or best alternative to remove the threat of Weapons of Mass Destruction from Iraq. I do not believe that military action will bring stability to Iraq or the Middle East. I do not believe that war with Iraq will reduce the threat of terrorism to the people of the United States. I do not believe that pre-emptive unilateral military action provides the legal, moral, ideological or social basis for expanding democracy, freedom, human rights or economic and social justice."

"I believe that war with Iraq will make it more difficult to find effective, multi-lateral, non-military solutions to the many and growing challenges and dangers we face in the international arena. I believe that war with Iraq, and its aftermath, will come at great cost to our nation. There is still time, still a chance, to pull back from the brink of war and to move forward with a determined strategy of collective action and international solidarity to end the threats of Weapons of Mass Destruction and terrorism."

"I have no doubt that America will prevail militarily. However, as we press forward with this war I remain mindful of the terrible human tragedy facing the people of Iraq and of the inherent inability of this war to achieve our goals of ensuring the safety of our homeland and the American people. The problem of Weapons of Mass Destruction will continue to confront us on many fronts. I expect that we will be faced with ever more complex and difficult circumstances in bringing peace and stability to Iraq and the entire Mideast region. It is my hope and expectation that we will redouble our efforts to seek collective, non-military solutions to these critical issues."

These statements still reflect my views. As reports of the circumstances surrounding the events of September 11, 2001 and the subsequent response of government, my focus is on pressing for real and immediate alternatives to current policy. While the great, overwhelming majority of our men and women in uniform have done everything requested of them, some of our nation's most respected military leaders including Retired Generals Anthony Zinni, Norman Schwarzkopf, Wesley Clark, and Eric Shinseki, have joined in harsh criticism of the lead-up, planning and strategy of the war.

No less troubling are the slowly emerging plans for Iraqi "sovereignty." There are deep concerns about the legitimacy of the interim government, over the control of the Iraqi army, police and paramilitary forces, over the development of the Iraqi oil industry, over the freedom of the print and electronic media and a host of other questions. The Iraq quagmire is taking the lives and bodies of our young men and women, more than 800 of our finest young people have died in the war to date. Thousands more have been wounded requiring and deserving the finest medical care our country can offer, they will require assistance from our Veterans Administration in future years. I hope Congress will do everything necessary to meet the needs of our veterans.

For information on the costs of the war please [click here](#)